

Miss Kathleen Mary Hollins
1909 – 1997

**Head Mistress Hutchinson Memorial
Church of England School, Checkley
1946-1972**



Photo courtesy Tean and Checkley Historical Society.

Miss Hollins was Headmistress of Checkley School for twenty six years from 1946 to 1972 when she retired. Kathleen Mary Hollins was born near Leigh in 1909. Her parents, Samuel and Elizabeth (nee Wright) Hollins were farmers at Dods Leigh Cottage Farm. She had three brothers Freer, Geoffrey and Stanley and one sister, Marjorie.

In 1946 she was appointed as Headmistress of Checkley School. She lived with her sister Marjorie in the School House which was situated next to the school. Some time after Miss Hollins' retirement it was demolished because it was in a poor condition.

The following is Miss Hollins' story of her time at Hutchinson Memorial School which first appeared in Jim Foley's book *Checkley Where Time Stands Still* published in 1992. This online edition with additional photos and information was published in 2018 by Jim Foley.

MISS HOLLINS REMEMBERS

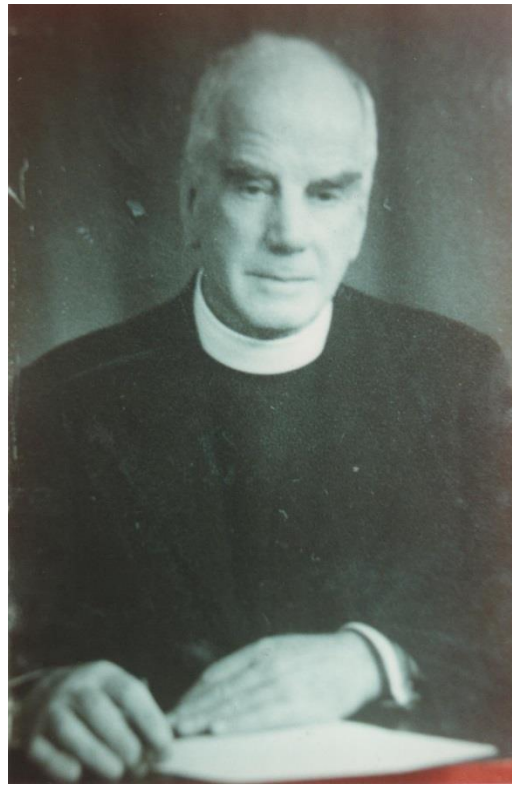


Hutchinson Memorial School better known as Checkley School. Postcard courtesy Mrs Ivy Shore, nee Farmer.

Checkley then was almost totally agricultural - a village that completely changed while I was there. There were families that had lived there for at least a lifetime - Philips, Copes, Reeves, Raysons, Baileys, Swinsons and Vernons. There was a squire, Mr. Humphrey Philips, at Heybridge, Lower Tean and Mr. Anthony Philips at Heath House overlooking Lower Tean and Checkley. Both had large estates. Heybridge covered some of Lower Tean, Checkley and most of Leigh. Heath House covered parts of Checkley, Tean and as far away as Freehay. Heath House was used as a Red Cross Hospital during the Second World War with Mrs. Humphrey Philips as Commandant.

The Rector of Checkley was the Rev W Drinkwater almost at the end of a very long incumbency. He was a perfect gentleman. When he could no longer walk and he was pushed in a wheelchair he never failed to raise his hat to a parishioner, though he could hardly hold it. He employed a curate, Mr Godfrey, when he was unable to cope with the parish. Rev. Drinkwater had married Miss Cooper, Head

Teacher of Uttoxeter Girls' High School a short time before I was appointed. They both took the greatest interest in anything connected with the well-being of the school and helped whenever possible.



Rev Drinkwater Rector of Checkley Parish

There were still a few people using the footpath to Leigh village and station but as there was now a bus service on the A50 there were many fewer than I remembered as a child. Then there was a steady trickle of walkers past the farm where my parents lived. Incidentally, the views from Checkley Bank on that footpath were, in my opinion, some of the most beautiful in North Staffordshire. Unfortunately that view is now gone - bisected by the Uttoxeter to Blythe Bridge motorway - a new section of the A50.



Checkley from Checkley Bank

Postcard courtesy Bert Rayson

Before the by-pass was built the A50 through Checkley was a nightmare for teachers at Checkley School which was on the busy main road. When I saw the traffic I refused the post as I considered it too dangerous to accept the responsibility for the safety of the children, but Mrs Drinkwater persuaded me to accept by telling me that a new road was planned to run across the top of Mr Joe Ede's orchard to come into use three years later. It was told to me in good faith, but the road arrived 30 years later on the other side of the valley after I had left.

The school was delightful, the children being very friendly and pleasant and the atmosphere very obvious to a complete stranger. The parents could not have been more helpful nor co-operative. Coming from Birmingham, hard hit by rationing, I was impressed by the rosy cheeks of Checkley children who had fared better.

The school buildings had been badly neglected and had not been re-decorated during the war nor improved since it was built in 1879. There were two wash hand basins - one in the kitchen and the other in a shed. The lavatories were across the yard and were ordinary buckets emptied by Cheadle Council once a month. I felt I had

achieved something when I succeeded in persuading the authority that Elsan chemical toilets would be more hygienic. There were three lavatories on the girls' side, one for infants, one for the girls, one for teachers, and two for the boys including a urinal.

There were two classrooms, a kitchen (the school was used by the parish for social functions), a passage used as a cloakroom for older children and a tiny built-on cloakroom for infants at the end of the building. Heating was by open fires, one in each room. Coal was stored in a shed behind the building and was delivered when needed by horse and cart and later by motor lorries. There were a few incidents with the coal. A young man delivered the coal and one day a little girl said, "He is a very kind young man. Whenever he comes to school he drops off four or five bags for my Granny who is very poor."

There was a staff of four at the school; a teacher, Miss Collier, a cleaner, Mrs Fairbanks, a newly appointed school meals helper, Mrs Robertson and me. We had 66 children.

A happier, more hard-working group of people it would have been difficult to find. The four staff carried on for some years, never complaining about being overworked. Miss Collier was a pure genius as an infant teacher and the children adored her. She was very quiet yet discipline was excellent. If two children were about to quarrel she would say, "Not Tony and Graham! I always think you are the best of friends. Now hold hands, walk all round the playground and when you get back come and tell me you are good friends again." It never failed. Her teaching was excellent. All children read by seven years of age and could work four rules in arithmetic.

Mrs Fairbanks had cleaned the school for years and took great pride in her work. The school was spotless. Her husband, a miner, suffered from coal dust infections; he tried to work as a gardener but gradually became a helpless invalid with tiny financial payments. They were very poor but she never complained and although aged around 70 was always bright and cheerful. I once caught her cleaning a tiled passage floor on her hands and knees and told her

she must use a mop. She told me when she could not clean properly she would give up and since helpers were extremely difficult to find the scrubbing on hands and knees continued. She was paid 15 shillings a week.

Mrs Robertson, in charge of school meals, also had a husband who suffered from a mining induced illness. She, too, did an excellent job. The meals were delivered daily in heated containers and which she served up so attractively. Everything was spotlessly clean and the children really appreciated their meals. She later married again and became Mrs Moore. She now lives in Utttoxeter.

There were several old ladies living in the village and they had memories going back to the beginning of this century and before. Mrs Hurst kept the Post Office, She had been left a widow with two small boys and no income so had to get work at Heybridge in order to live. She was paid 2/6d. a week for working in the laundry from early morning until late afternoon. She was also given left-overs from the kitchens and told me how grateful she was after a party, especially for a bag of crusts which lasted some days.

Mrs Reeves, Joe Ede's grandmother who lived at Hawthorn House just a short distance from the school on the main road, liked discussing the old days and was interested in old lanes and footpaths and deplored the fact that so many had fallen into disuse. One she described was the coal road, a lane which ran from Cheadle through Freehay up to Heath House fields from Hollington Level, straight down into the old lane which ran between the farms on the hill into a lane which ended by Mrs Reeves' house. This road can still be followed easily and in Goldhurst Fields road markings can still be seen on a large stone post. She said after crossing the main road the lane continued through the churchyard by the Rectory hedge, through the crossing of the paths and coming out by the present gate by Beddows' cottage.



Mrs Reeves of Hawthorn House. Photo courtesy Mrs Joan Ede.

The lane then ran down to Rectory Farm and along the side of farm, across the ford on the River Tean where it turned left. The lane which looks like a wide cart track can still be seen today. It continued on to Leigh and the old lane there which still exists. It was a bridle road for many years which I think is closed now following the building of the A50 by-pass road. This would have been a blow to Mr. Barker who lived at Wisbar House at the crossroads in the village and kept a horse and trap so that he could drive it along the lane once a year to Leigh to ensure that it was kept open. He was successful and the bridleway remained until the motorway was built. The lane through the churchyard was filled in when the churchyard was extended and the New Road was built, hence its name.

Mrs Beddow who lived in the little white cottage in the churchyard also had much to tell of the old days. She had cleaned the old school which stood in the corner of the churchyard and its boundaries were very clear when I first saw it. The building was small but pleasant and she used to take washing to dry at night, with the approval of the authorities.



Beddows' house, Checkley. Photo Tom Beddow.

The old Sunday School which stood at the back of Beddows' cottage became Checkley's first Day School until the present school was built. The old lane mentioned by Mrs Reeves came out of the churchyard here before continuing down to Rectory Farm and on to Leigh.



Mrs Beddow. Photo courtesy Tom Beddow.

Mrs Fairbanks who lived in the house at the corner of Church Lane and the main road also knew a great deal about Checkley and especially about Leigh and the people and parishes, and her sister Mrs Chell who lived next door could help.

The transport cafe on the main road towards Fole, known as the Road House, was a single storey building which was extended several times and became a very busy and prosperous business with lots of truckers making use of it and staying overnight either in their cabs or in the accommodation provided there. The coming of the A50 motorway ended its prosperity and although other attempts were made to make it profitable it was finally closed, demolished and the site is now being sold for house building.

Fole Dairy had much smaller premises in 1946. Much of the milk processed there was delivered by the farmers by horse and cart but some was collected by lorry.

The Mill had been a flour mill and still has the water wheel fed by the river Tean behind the building. The Mill had been there for a long time. My father as a boy had broken a leg swinging on the back of one of the horse drawn lorries which carried flour for transport from Leigh Station all over the country. The flour was sold under the trade-name Millennium and I believe it is still available. The firm moved to Liverpool once cheap Canadian wheat was imported and home grown corn was no longer profitable. The Vernon family who had installed the organ in Checkley Church went with the firm.

The biggest change in my time in Checkley was the coming of the sewerage treatment site. The avenue and large house, bought as part of the site, were previously occupied by the Greensmith brothers noted for their careful ways. I once walked behind them in Uttoxeter. They stopped. One said to the other, "Do you think we might buy a paper?" Long pause as we all walked several yards. "Oh", said his brother after considering, "I reckon we might". They were reputedly very wealthy.

When the school building was being modernized we used the canteen at the site as a class-room, a most popular arrangement with the children who were taken there. Six houses were built down one side of the avenue to provide homes for some of the workers.

This was followed by the building of the Wimpey estate at Lower Tean. Three hundred houses were built and when occupied children from the estate made a big impact on the school. They came from

all over the world, especially Hong Kong. Many of the parents had been in the services and most had lived in towns.

The two types of children, country and town, mixed remarkably well and friendships developed from the start, but teaching them was most difficult and many were retarded by Checkley standards. The newcomers had little in common coming from such different backgrounds and experiences. Many had had difficult times during the war and had had their education seriously disrupted. Classes had to be re-arranged in groups according to attainment. Some classes had very big age ranges; several classes were purely remedial. We were fortunate in being given two very experienced retired infants' teachers on a half-time basis.

The stage was brought into use as a classroom and Mrs Wilson taught there in the mornings, Mrs Morris in the afternoons. They had classes for the non-readers and backward of the new admissions, who came trickling in for months. Some were highly intelligent and learnt to read well in a few weeks. In fact, one boy admitted in September as a non-reader passed the 11+ the following Spring. The parents were most helpful.

Checkley Cricket Club and the school were greatly indebted to Mr Pigden, a retired teacher from Birmingham. We were allowed to use the Cricket Field by the Club for games periods. Mr Pigden was intensely interested in cricket and was waiting on the field whenever the boys arrived for games having offered to coach them for cricket. He was undoubtedly a perfectionist and would not overlook the smallest fault. He would pin a 2" square of white paper on the pitch and the boys had to bowl to hit that spot, while he was equally particular about the niceties in the use of the cricket bat. A few years later Checkley Cricket Team were highly successful and the team were mostly the boys Mr Pigden had coached with such care.

A large garage and petrol station in the village added to its amenities. It was owned by two local men, Messrs. Barker and Shenton, who were very generous to the school in lending their premises and helping the school in any way they could.

The premises were large and were lent for school plays, bazaars and other money-raising efforts. Later on the Church Council used them very successfully. It was a loss to the village when they decided to move their business.

Other businesses started up but none were successful and eventually the garage was demolished and Badgers Hollow was built on the site next to the Cranberry estate houses.

The Reading Room at Lower Tean was used for various activities. Mrs Morton Philips told me it had been built on the Heybridge Estate to provide a soup kitchen for the use of the poor of Lower Tean and Checkley and they supplied the soup. Later it became the Reading Room. Mrs Philips owned the piano there and gave it to the school.



The Reading Room - the single storey building - Lower Tean which is said to have been built with the bricks from the old school at Checkley. Photo Tom Beddow

After the death of the Rev Wm Drinkwater the Rev Ralph Philips was appointed as Rector. He belonged to the branch of the family that had lived in Hollington where his father was Rector along with the parishes of Checkley, Tean and Foxt to each of which he appointed curates. The Rev Ralph Philips was the youngest of the 13 children and he and his wife had seen violent happenings during

the Blitz in London during the second War. He was a scholar and never forgot any book he had read and could discuss it at any time. They were individuals in their life style. Once he told me he was skint and wanted to go on holiday but couldn't afford to. A few days later he said they were going. An antiques dealer had called at the Rectory when the Rector had said they had no antiques but that their attics were full of old rubbish. The dealer had cleared the lot for £60. "He was such a nice man and we can now go on holiday." I could not help thinking he must have had several items worth £60. When they left the back door was standing wide open and several people had been told to go in and get what they required.

Checkley's ghost was well known. I was at a Church meeting in an upstairs room at the Rectory - now the nursing home - when suddenly there were noises on the landing and knocking on the door. "It's all right, dear", said the Rector, Rev Ralph Philips. "We are just having a meeting". The noise stopped and one of the men present opened the door; there was no one there and the landing and stairs were empty.



The Old Rectory in Church Lane which became a Nursing Home and is now in flats. Photo Jim Foley

There was definitely something queer about the ghost. I met Miss Stonehouse, a previous head teacher at Hutchinson Memorial School. She asked, "Have you seen the ghost?" "What ghost?" was my reply. "Mrs Hutchinson", she said. She went on to say that one summer afternoon, after school, she walked across the churchyard going to the Rectory. She met an old lady dressed in a black cloak and white lace collar and wearing a bonnet. She just smiled and went on. Miss Stonehouse went on, thinking no more about it until she went into the Rector's study and on the wall was a small framed sketch of the old lady. She asked whose photograph it was. "Oh", said the Rector, "It was the wife of the last Rector but she has been dead some years now". "Well, I've just met her in the churchyard a few minutes ago", said Miss Stonehouse. Although most sceptical I must admit I had a queer experience which I could never explain. It was after school and late twilight. I thought Mrs Fairbanks was cleaning as I finished some marking. I picked up some books ready to go and as I went out of the room I noticed how dark it was getting in the corridor so I went back and switched on the light in the classroom. To my surprise Mrs Fairbanks was not there so I was puzzled but thought she had gone elsewhere. However, since there was no light on, I glanced into the other rooms and since she was not there concluded she was working outside and went home. Next morning Mrs Fairbanks came and apologised for not coming the previous night but her husband had had a bad asthma attack and she could not leave him. I wondered who it had been in the alcove to the classroom.

Old newspaper article on the ghost of Mrs Hutchinson at Checkley Rectory.



Mr Ede's orchard behind the school was a favourite playfield for the children and Mr. & Mrs. Ede were most generous in allowing them to use it and giving them fruit. Mr. Ede would meet a group of them and ask, "Do any of you children like pears?" Their reply was an emphatic "Yes". "Well, bring some bags tomorrow" and next day they followed him round the orchard, a replica Pied Piper. He would shake the trees and down would come the fruit to the great delight of the children.

A very beautiful elm tree growing in his hedge was blown down in a storm. Timber merchants made it safe and placed the small boughs across the field, the bigger ones on a pile and the enormous trunk

separately about 30 yards into the field. The timber merchants offered Mr Ede £60 for the trunk and agreed to collect it the following Monday, but that week the children played on it and Mr Ede watching said, "Aren't they a pretty sight?" The trunk was never collected, to the children's great delight and the pleasure given to them was incalculable.



Rectory Farm was once the Rectory for Checkley Parish. Note the mounting block at the side of the building. The lane at the side went down to the ford on the River Tean and continued to Leigh village. Postcard courtesy Mrs Halden.

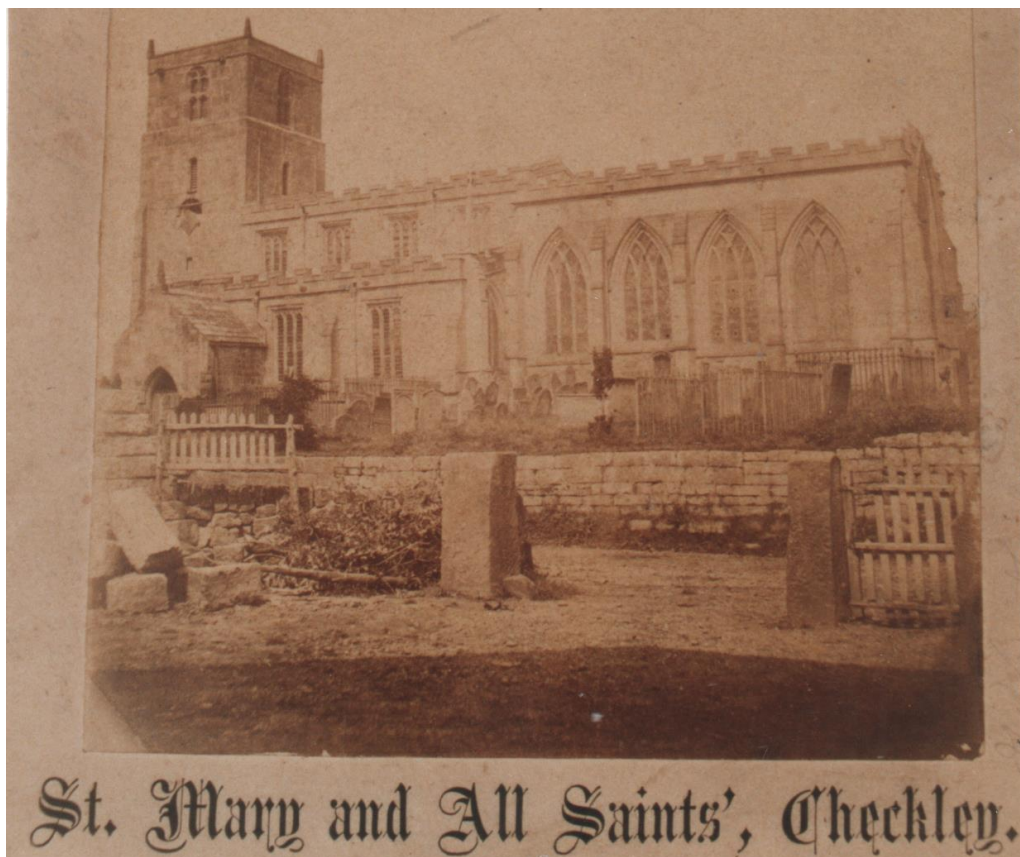
The Rectory Farm then owned by the Halden family was said to be the oldest house and buildings in Checkley. It had a beautiful panelled room known as the Monks' Room from monks who had visited from Croxden Abbey before they had a priest at Checkley. The path they were said to have used is still in use going past High Ridges Farm, through Hollington to Croxden.

Oliver Cromwell was said to have watched a battle at Deadman's Green from a tower at Rectory Farm but there is no proof and the Church tower, to me, would have been a more suitable site.

The Church has been well described as a history book in stone. I believe full accounts of it have already been written but I think a

would-be historian should ascertain the facts before committing them as such to paper. An H.M.I. once asked me to take him to view the Church. I showed him the well-known historical pieces and after examining them I showed him the various mass dials on the south wall. "This is all very interesting", he said, "but how much can you prove?"

Equally disconcerting was a sermon by the Rector on Medieval life and services. "After mass on Sundays the men would assemble in front of the Church for archery practice. Bows would be made from the old yew trees still standing there." That very week I was visiting Mrs Ede and she showed me some old photographs of Checkley taken around the beginning of this century. One was of the churchyard and across to the Church. I was surprised to see the old yew trees were missing and bushes were growing in their place.



A very old photo of Checkley Church without the yew trees. Photo courtesy Mrs Joan Ede.

I suppose the Sewage Treatment Site might have brought the biggest change in Checkley while I was there. I remember our attendance officer saying, when work on the site started, "We can say goodbye to the Checkley we have known. Once the sewers are laid the changes will come. The authorities will have to make maximum use of the new facilities and the nearer the works, the bigger the help. Houses will spring up here and the district around Checkley will become a dormitory area with few people working locally but many in the nearby towns".

One of the outstanding occasions at the school was a visit from the Lord Mayor of Stoke-on-Trent wearing full regalia. Alderman Tom Beddow had attended Checkley School and recalled his days there with pleasure. He presented the school with a framed photograph of himself in his full regalia as Lord Mayor. His mother was able to attend, very proud of her son's achievements, as were parishioners who had known him. Two of the children presented a book of photographs of Checkley to him.

The A50 road became more and more dangerous over the years. Miss Collier often spoke of the changes she had seen. As a child she had often bowled a hoop from Tean to Checkley, only meeting a cart occasionally. An inspector who came to school noticed the unusual phasing in the morning assembly and later realised I was fitting it in with traffic lulls. I was so used to the noise I no longer realised that had to be done.

Getting the children across the road was a very difficult job for teachers each morning and afternoon. In the early days there were no traffic wardens and sometimes we would have to wait for five minutes or more before we could manage it. The children were most co-operative and helpful and people often commented on their excellence in coping and following instructions implicitly. They were never allowed to cross the road unless accompanied by a teacher, nor to go through the school gate by themselves. It became so difficult on Uttoxeter Race Days that I had to ask for Police help and ultimately we were given a warden.

Traffic accidents often upset the children, especially when people were hurt or killed. Once, knowing the school 'bus had been diverted I went to meet it and to walk the children along the pavement. On my way amid a great deal of confusion I saw a crumpled tarpaulin in the road and sticking out of the side a hand, and such a well-shaped, capable hand. To me it deepened the tragedy. When the bus arrived the driver told me he had been instructed by the police to drive round the village. The children were put down by the Church and had to be taken across the churchyard to the school gate, very subdued and concerned.

There were other fatal accidents. Once, late at night, some young men had offered some girls a lift in their car from Longton to Tean. They did not stop in Tean but carried on to Uttoxeter at a speed which frightened the girls. They went right round the New Road roundabout and straight back through Beamhurst and Fole. When they reached the school house in Checkley one of the girls grabbed the steering wheel and threw the car out of control. It skidded across the road and went over the hedge. The girls came to my house seeking help. One boy had been killed outright, one was badly hurt and the girls were all badly shaken and frightened. We did what we could to help, the police took statements, then took the girls home. A few days later they came back to thank us for the help we had given.

Two cars came over the school hedge and a lorry over the school house hedge, luckily all without any injury to anyone, while several cars were damaged by vehicles being pushed into one another outside the school gates and fence. Some were stationary, putting down children or picking them up. It must have been a great weight lifted from the Checkley community when the new motorway was finally opened taking most of the traffic from the road by the school and returning Checkley to its previous status as a quiet country village.

By 1957 things had become very difficult at school. Miss Collier wanted to retire; there were 64 children on roll taught by two teachers. When Miss Collier was absent due to the death of her

sister I had all 64 - it was usually impossible to find a temporary teacher. I put the infants into 4 groups of eight and arranged for 4 of the most senior children to each teach a group. Part of the day I set the juniors to work in charge of one child who had to report to me if any difficulty arose while I taught the infants. Mr. Taylor, deputy Director of Education, called one afternoon and went into the junior room which had a child in charge. He was most impressed and said the child was so capable and the children responded so well he felt a supply teacher would be superfluous and he knew several teachers not as competent as that child. The Authority was in great difficulty finding supply teachers and he was sending round to married ex-teachers hoping to recruit a few.

On 7 May Mrs Hilditch arrived but said her husband had only agreed for her to teach one day. She had been an art teacher in a senior school but immediately plunged in to teach the infants with great success. I begged her to stay until at any rate Miss Collier returned. She evidently persuaded her husband and turned up next morning ready for work and stayed for 16 years! She proved to be one of the most gifted teachers I had ever known: art, music, dancing, swimming or 3R work she taught equally successfully.

When Miss Collier returned I had already been told by the County Education Department that I could retain Mrs Hilditch as her husband would not agree for her to teach elsewhere and at the next Managers' Meeting she was made a permanent member of staff. She was appointed Deputy Head Teacher in 1969 and resigned in 1973 on appointment as Head Teacher at Denstone J.M. School. So having agreed to come for one day in 1957 she stayed until 1973, to the great benefit of the school.

During this time the number of children on roll increased up to 110 and there were several short-term teachers appointed. Miss Callister took Mrs Hilditch's place. Another competent teacher, who is still there now, is Mrs Harvey. We really were a most fortunate school as regards staffing. Non-teaching staff were equally efficient; both Mr and Mrs W Stewart were parents who helped the school whenever they could. Mr. Stewart was in the Royal Navy at the end of the war and was expert in ropes, knots

and fixing things as well as climbing and ladders and reaching apparently inaccessible places and as we were a female staff we were really grateful for his help.

Mrs Stewart was always ready to help when we were in staffing difficulties no matter what the job and when a school welfare assistant post was to be established she was appointed to the post, which was mostly caring for infants but also with older children when needed. In the infant room she soon became familiar with the teaching of reading, English and numbers, and soon was as capable as a trained teacher and any spare time she had she would help with reading etc. She was very popular with the children and won the confidence of the shyest and most timid of infants with her pleasant, motherly manner. She had been Welsh speaking until in her teens, which proved a real asset when three Welsh children from Blaenau-Ffestiniog were admitted, unable to speak English. Mrs Stewart took them and in a few weeks they were speaking English. It also proved useful at other times, notably for the Investiture of The Prince of Wales, when she taught everyone Welsh songs.

The secretaries were other very efficient helpers, first Mrs. Walker then Mrs Brandrick gave years of very useful service to the school most willingly. The School Meals staff provided most satisfactory meals which the children and staff really enjoyed. First Mrs Harrison, followed by Mrs Preussner were the cooks and Mrs Coulton the chief assistant. Mrs Preussner, a farmer's daughter, who retired in 1991, always provided a truly nourishing meal as did Mrs Harrison, also a gifted cook.

Mrs Fairbanks, Mrs Hawley and Mrs Richards were the main caretakers and gave valuable service and kept the school so well that many visitors commented on its cleanliness. One inspector said, "These are the most important people on a school staff and have a big influence on the life of the whole school. A clean and tidy building and surroundings inspires all."



Presentation to Mrs Fairbanks on her retirement after 41 years as cleaner/caretaker at Checkley School 23 July 1958.

Photo courtesy Mrs Joan Ede.

L to R: Rev Ralph Philips, Mrs Doris Philips, Mrs Fairbanks, Mrs Joan Ede, School Governor.

Mrs Fairbanks received a pension of 10/- a week from the County Council after 41 years' service at Checkley School.

When Mrs Fairbanks retired school governor Mrs Joan Ede and I had a battle with Staffordshire County Council to get them to give Mrs Fairbanks a pension. After many letters, telephone calls and visits to Stafford Mrs Fairbanks was awarded a pension of 10/- per week.

In all my years of teaching I never came across anywhere like Checkley for the friendliness of the parents and the community, the co-operative and helpful children and the excellent hard-working staff - teachers, caretakers, cooks, helpers and ancillaries. Checkley will always be special.

Old newspaper articles about the school in the early 1970s.



These children need not leave their own village if they are interested in history, for Checkley is steeped in it. The village also boasts its full share of ghostly happenings. Here, the Headmistress of the village school, Miss Kathleen Hollins, is busy with her top class pupils.

The Headmistress, Miss Kathleen Hollins has taught at the school for 27 years. She was born in the nearby hamlet of Leigh and she has taught in Birmingham. Miss Hollins and her staff of three now cope with 90 children. Miss Hollins said: "I find that teaching in a village school is a more personal thing altogether. I enjoy living and working in Checkley."

One of the problems facing Miss Hollins and her staff is the busy A50 which passes only feet away from the front gate of the school. In an attempt to keep the children out of danger they are taken home from school through the churchyard opposite after being watched across the road by a patrolman. As I walked past the Rectory on my way to my car I stopped to listen for Mrs. Hutchinson's ghostly footsteps but heard nothing. Perhaps another day.



Rector presents shield to Checkley pupils

The Rector of Checkley (Dr. George Lawton) presents a shield to pupils of the Hutchinson Memorial Church of England School, Checkley. The trophy has been won by the school in a nationwide swimming competition. The presentation ceremony was held at the school on Friday.

Some entries in the School Log Book during Miss Hollins' headship by kind permission of Mrs Paula Snee Head Teacher of Hutchinson Memorial School, Checkley, Staffordshire.

Miss Hollins will have made most of these entries herself. Gradually over the years the number of entries were reduced so that only important entries were made. I have omitted a lot of entries as they were repetitive and added nothing new.

1946

March 1st Miss K M Hollins commenced duties as Head Teacher of this school.

May 1st. School re-opened with 56 children on roll.

May 6th. School dinners were served for the first time under the supervision of Miss Young canteen supervisor. 55 meals were served.

May 16th Police Sergeant C Massey gave a talk to the children on Road Safety 3.45 - 3.30 p.m.

July 1 - 5 Parents have been invited to visit the school during the dinner hour this week to see the school dinners in progress.

July 6th A party of 65 parents and children spent an enjoyable day at Rhyl.

September 23rd School was closed for Tean Wakes Holiday.

December 12th Mr Williams, Deputy Director of Education, Stafford visited the school. He agreed to the lengthening of the mid-day brake necessitated by the serving of a hot meal.

1947

January 6th School re-opened with 46 children on the books 4 new children being admitted.

February 4th School was closed due to inclement weather.

February 11th School was re-opened but no children attended and as there was no improvement in the weather it was closed until February 13th.

February 17th School reopened 28 children being present.

March 8th Accident to David Pillans aged 5 radio loudspeaker fell on his head; triangular cut on his head. Dr E Wilson of Tean attended and one stitch inserted. Mrs Pillans was present.

July 22nd All children attended a special Children's Service (at the Church) taken by Rev A Godfrey to mark the end of the school year.

July 25th A school outing was held. 72 parents and children visited Liverpool and New Brighton.

September 9th School reopened with 53 children on roll. 4 tons 12 cwt of coal has been delivered.

September 2nd School closed for Tean Wakes Holiday.

October 8th Miss Hollins was absent from school following the death of her father.

November 14th School was closed in order to hold a sale of work in aid of the school.

November 19th Mr Mansfield, School Attendance Officer, visited the school. Bus vouchers have now been issued to children living more than two miles from the school.

November 20th School closed for the wedding of Princess Elizabeth.

November 29th Dr D M Wilson M.O.H. visited school to immunize children against diphtheria. 48 children received treatment.

1948

February 26th Mr Scott Physical Training Inspector visited school. He left 25 pairs of gym shoes.

March 15th Mr Harrison of Fole Hall Cottage sent his three children but because of lack of places was advised to apply for admission at

Bradley Street School, Uttoxeter. 29 children in attendance with a seating capacity for 30. 3 children had attended Tutbury Junior School.

April 26th School closed for a day's holiday for the occasion of the Royal Silver Wedding.

April 28th Mr Todd H.M.I. visited school during the afternoon.

May 14th An outbreak of sickness among the children was reported to the Director of Education, Stafford. Dr Wilson, School Medical Officer, called at school during the afternoon to make investigations. At the end of the afternoon session the school closed for the Whitsun Holiday.

September 20th School closed for Tean Wakes Holiday.

December 20th Owing to sickness among children and parents (36 children present out of 54) arrangements for parents to visit school to see Nativity Plays and hear carols had to be cancelled.

1949

March 14-18 Miss Hollins absent from school suffering from respiratory catarrh. The Infant Children were taught by Miss Mary Collier who gave her services without payment. Miss Mabel Collier taught the Junior Section.

July 1st School was closed for the annual school outing. 35 children and 33 adults went to Rhyl.

1951

January 9th School reopened with 50 children on roll.

January 25th Mr Wood, District Inspector, visited school to discuss further measures for the safety of children crossing the road outside school.

February 7th Owing to fog, icy roads and late buses only 9 children were present at 9.10 this morning.

May 10th School was closed for an outing to London and to the Festival of Britain Exhibition. The party consisted of 22 children and 17 adults.

June 28th Miss Hollins absent from school during the afternoon to attend interview at Corporation Junior Girls' School, Stafford.

1953

June 1-5 School closed for the Coronation Holiday.

June 12th School outing. A party of 28 visited London to see the Coronation Decorations and places of interest.

June 23rd School was closed during the afternoon session. Children and parents visited the Elite Cinema at Uttoxeter to see the Coronation Film.

October 27th 26 children and 18 adults visited the Blythe Valley Reservoir to see the official opening by the Queen Mother.

July 2nd A party of 57 adults and children visited Skegness for the school outing.

November 17-19 Miss Hollins absent following the death of her mother.

1955

January 18th Accident Michael Frederick Gallimore 10, fell while sliding, taken on bus to see Dr C Watson - too late to go to hospital with a fractured arm.

May 6th Sylvia Rose Pritchard 9 of The Cottage, Fole collided with Michael Gallimore.

July 1st Parents and children visit Liverpool and New Brighton.

1956

February 20th Accident John Stewart Sale, Springside, Fole sliding before school and fell.

May 2nd Sickness and diarrhea school closed for 14 days until
May 16th

June 1th School reopens.

June 25th Accident Joseph Henry Ede. Climbing over fence.

October 31st Miss Collier gave notice of resignation to the School
Managers and the L.E.A.

December 5th Miss Collier has reconsidered her decision to retire
and has agreed to continue her work here.

1957

April 5th During the past week 9 cases of measles reported.

May 7th Miss Collier absent owing to the death of her sister.

May 13th Now 64 on roll.

September 23rd Influenza epidemic 37 children present out of
64. This is the third epidemic within a year, most of the children
having had measles and mumps previously. Miss Collier absent
with influenza.

October 31st Miss Collier sent in notices of resignation to the
school managers and the L.E.A.

November 28th Dr Tomlin, Medical Officer of Health, visited
school because of outbreak of sickness among the children. 28
children were affected.

December 3rd Dr Tomlin visited school. The sickness epidemic
appears to be over.

December 20th Miss Collier retired from her post as Infant
Teacher after 31 years' service at this school.

1958

July 23rd On behalf of the children and staff Christine Lownds
and Joseph Ede presented an electric kettle to Mrs Fairbanks on
her retirement after 41 years' service as caretaker of the school.

July 24th Mrs Fairbanks retired.

1962

July 4th visit to school by Tom Beddow Lord Mayor of Stoke on Trent.

1963

May 8th A High Definition School TV set installed a gift from Checkley Parents Club.

1972

February 8th Miss Hollins attended the funeral of Mrs Fairbanks former school caretaker for a period of over 40 years.

1973

January 13th Miss Hollins offered her notice to resign at the end of the summer term. (Miss Hollins had been ill a lot in 1972).

August 31st Miss Hollins finished duties.

